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Gov. Daugaard Signs HB1217

PIERRE, S.D. – Gov. Dennis Daugaard today signed House Bill 1217, “An Act to establish certain legislative findings pertaining to the decision of a pregnant mother considering termination of her relationship with her child by an abortion, to establish certain procedures to better insure that such decisions are voluntary, uncoerced, and informed, and to revise certain causes of action for professional negligence relating to performance of an abortion.”

“I think everyone agrees with the goal of reducing abortion by encouraging consideration of other alternatives,” Gov. Daugaard said. “I hope that women who are considering an abortion will use this three-day period to make good choices.”

Gov. Daugaard conferred on the legislation with South Dakota Attorney General Marty Jackley, whose office is responsible for defending the law against any challenge in court. Proponents of the legislation, including prime sponsor Rep. Roger Hunt, have pledged that private funds will be raised to help finance defense of the law.

Absent a legal challenge, the law will take effect on July 1, 2011. Now that the bill has been signed, the state Department of Health, led by Secretary Doneen Hollingsworth, will begin to plan for its implementation and enforcement.